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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Brazil

SUBJECT Brazilian Politics

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1. "Early in November, two amusing cartoons were published here on the subject of Adhemar de Barros, former governor of Sao Paulo and head of one of the Brazilian political parties. The first showed him marching determinedly upon the Statue of Liberty with a bottle of champagne. President Truman was remonstrating, 'But Adhemar, it has already been dedicated.'
2. "This cartoon finds its local flavor primarily in Adhemar's reputation for seeking publicity in many ways but especially in dedicating buildings, parks, bridges, etc. He is said to have dedicated one tunnel in Sao Paulo four times in various stages of construction.
3. "The second cartoon, shows an audience with General Eisenhower after the United States election. Adhemar asks 'How did you do it, General?' The answer is, 'It was without a caixinha, Mr. de Barros.'
4. "The first phrase refers to Adhemar's evident hunger for the Brazilian presidency in 1955. He wants to know the road that leads to that post. The CAIXINHA is the 'little box' which is frequently referred to as a characteristic of Adhemar's term as governor of Sao Paulo. Local stories convey the impression that it was filled primarily by ten per cent pay-offs from those receiving government contracts and by a split with those running the jogo de bicho (roughly equivalent to the numbers racket).
5. "These inferences are pinpricks however in comparison with the main impression that is held about politicians like Adhemar de Barros. A recent issue of Visao (a US-Brazilian news weekly) discusses him in these terms:

CPYRGHT

"Despite his denials (of being now a candidate for president) the behavior of Adhemar reveals that he will not easily relinquish the idea of occupying the Catete Palace. And his own political history demonstrates that he is a persistent man. Being outside of politics in 1934 against Vargas, he was later an appointive governor with Vargas. In 1945 he voted for Brigadier General Eduardo Gomes, in 1947 he fought against Vargas and in 1950 he assisted the old chief."

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6. "Individual shifts of party alliances have been substantial as Adhemar de Barros developed his new Social Progress Party. Such shifts are continuing as he tries to expand his influence in other states by attracting into the fold individuals who control large blocs of votes and who are ambitious for a higher political position. To gain a better appreciation of the process I visited with political leaders in Piracicaba, a city of 46,000 in Adhemar's own state of Sao Paulo.
7. "There are now four active important political parties in Piracicaba. The Partido Social Democratica (PSD--Social Democrat Party) and Uniao Democratica Nacional (UDN--National Democratic Union) developed before the time of Vargas' deposition in 1945. The Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro (PTB--Brazilian Labor Party) came into being to support Vargas and is under his direction. The Partido Social Progressista (PSP--Social Progress Party) was born in Sao Paulo under the leadership of Adhemar de Barros. The Partido Comunista Brasileira was dissolved by federal law several years ago.
8. "In 1946 there were 30 aldermen in Piracicaba of which 18 were members of the Democratic Union (UDN). The mayor, Luis Diaz Gonzaga, was also of this party. While in office he decided to throw his luck with Adhemar and went over to the Social Progress Party (PSP) taking his 18 aldermen with him. In 1951 he ran for the state legislature under the PSP label and won. At the same time the number of aldermen was reduced to 21 and PSP won 8 or 9 places, the PTB won 6 or 7 and the UDN and PSD three each. These are won on a proportional representation basis. A combination of the PTB, UDN and PSD succeeded in electing a supposedly PTB member Samuel de Castor Neves, as mayor against the candidate of the PSP. Some say he really is a PSP member.
9. "The way in which Luis Gonzaga could shift parties and take votes with him becomes clearer from the election procedures. The assistant to the election judge described them as follows:

(On the election day there are 65 mesas or precincts in the county of Piracicaba with about four in a group to divide up the names alphabetically. Election day is a holiday with the polls open from 7:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. There is a ribbon or rope keeping "electoral chiefs" one hundred meters away from the polling centers. No liquor is to be sold by the bars the day before or day of the elections. There are five election officials in each precinct--the president, two mesarios or table men and two secretaries. These are all non-political people or at least not active candidates. The elector is admitted to the room and gives his titulo (certificate) to the president. This is his authorization to vote (comparable to our pre-registration). His name is checked against the list and he is asked to sign his name, which he must do even if he takes half an hour and copies from a piece of paper. He may be challenged by the president to prove he can read and write but seldom is. (To vote he or she must be 18 and able to read and write).

(When his name is signed he is given an official envelope initialed by election officials and goes to a closed booth. Placed here are cedulas from all of the candidates. For each office he can put one cedula in the envelope. Two cedulas for one office invalidate that vote.

'On the next page is a cedula.

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UNIAO DEMOCRATICA NACIONAL

PARA VEREADOR

FRANCISCO SAIGOT CASTILLO

'All of the political parties have cédulas to distribute a month or two before elections. By bringing voters in a truck, taking them to party headquarters, emptying their pockets of other cédulas and passing out their own, giving them a couple of sandwiches and a drink and conducting them personally to the polling booth, there is a good chance that they will use these cédulas instead of trying to pick them out in the booth --especially since reading is difficult.

'The envelope is sealed, checked by an official and dropped in the urn. These are sealed at the end of the day and taken to a central place for counting. Political parties can have observers at the polling place and counting center if they wish. Before 1930 there were no secret ballots, but now Brazil has secret ballots and accurate counts.

'Did you infer that the bars are open?

'Oh yes, they are supposed to be closed but are open. The police and army are all in their barracks on election day and can be called out only by the election judge. People who are obviously drunk would not be permitted to vote but some intoxication would not matter.'

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10. 'To follow up the procedures a little farther I visited with several farmers and workers. These interviews leave the impression that party labels mean little. They think in terms of individuals, and especially of local people whom they see and know. For example a farmer with twenty acres of sugarcane has two sons of voting age. His wife does not vote even though women now have this privilege. [redacted] party Adhemar belonged to. One said PTB and the other PSP and then argued about it. They correctly identified Vargas with the Labor Party. They had respect for the present governor but did not know his party. Nor did they know or venture a guess as to either Gonzaga's or Samuel Neves' (the present mayor) party although they knew both and spoke well of them.
 11. 'We spoke of election day. This farmer lived close to town and preferred to walk to town rather than accept rides and food from one party and then vote for another as some do. He also said that many were influenced to change their vote on election day by food and drink, and he didn't want to take a chance of doing that, and so would not accept such outlays, at least not until after he had voted. Then his son told of a neighbor who had been approached after a free lunch by an 'electoral chief.' He was asked whom he was going to vote for, and he answered for [redacted] and brought out the cédula to show it. But the cédula was for another candidate. He could not read well enough to tell. So the 'electoral chief' tore up the old cédula and gave him new ones so he could vote 'right'.

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12. "Frequently and whenever possible the 'electoral chief' will take the voter to the polling booth and watch him walk through the 100 meter barred zone into the booth so that another 'electoral chief' from another party doesn't have a chance to change ballots again.
13. "A former mayor of Piracicaba summed it up this way. 'Brazilian politics are a personal and not a party matter. The results of the elections are known in advance because you know the deals that have been made and you know which one has the money and organization for trucks and electoral chiefs, and these are the major elements in winning an election. The electoral chiefs are personally loyal to a prominent local man and will switch parties with him.'
14. "How this worked out in Piracicaba is about as follows. The mayor in 1946, Gonzaga, wanted to make certain city improvements. Adhemar de Barros through the Caixa Economica (a state controlled bank) apparently agreed to make certain loans and support Gonzaga for the state assembly if he left the National Democratic Union Party and joined the Social Progress Party. Gonzaga claimed a second loan for even more needed improvements was promised, but fell through when a mayor supported jointly by the Democratic Union, Social Democrats and Labor Party, defeated the Social Progress candidate. But Gonzaga won the assembly election, because he was personally popular and had a substantial group of electoral chiefs, and because the other three parties did not unite on an opposition candidate. Sr. Gonzaga had improved country roads and made other town improvements.
15. "The same sort of things occurred in other cities of Sao Paulo as Adhemar built his party and is now occurring in other states as important personalities are being attracted into the party. Opposition coalitions are sometimes formed, but frequently the opposition joins the winning combination to insure some access to patronage. This latter point is an interesting arrangement.
16. "At present, for example, President Vargas has members of the Social Progress, Labor and Social Democrat parties in his cabinet since all three groups supported his candidature in 1950. Moreover he has been trying to split off parts of the opposition Democratic Union party by working with certain individuals and making veiled promises of ministerial posts. Yet even the participating parties in the government are looking to 1955 elections and have tried to dissociate themselves from having to support all or even most of the Vargas program. In this way they each have a free hand in the 1955 campaign, but it also leads to Parliamentary irresponsibilities. Yet they are careful not to lose access to patronage.
17. "Patronage operates in several ways. Within a Ministry, certain individuals can be replaced in accordance with the desires of the Minister. Others subject to Civil Service rules, can be given less important or more important roles. More important recently, new functions, agencies and programs can be developed to create new jobs. In the important Ministry of Transportation and Public Works there are many alternative ways of allocating contracts. Significantly this Ministry is held by a member of Adhemar de Barros' party. Another important element of patronage is available to members of Parliament and state assemblies. Bills for aid to churches, schools, roads and other purposes will be approved for those working with the majority. Thus Gonzaga as a state deputy in Sao Paulo has effective control over the distribution of about 800 contos (\$40,000) a year of state funds. A fourth of this is given to the new cathedral in Piracicaba.

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18. "The attitude of the church to political movements is hard to pin down. The clergy apparently was opposed to Adhemar de Barros in 1946 - some say because he accepted Communist support, though friends claim that it was because the Cardinal was a close friend of an opposing candidate for governor. While some deny, the majority say that the opposition of the church included discussions in Masses. However, it is claimed that the church no longer opposes him, possibly because of gifts to the many new churches being built or through other ways of reconciliation. There is a small Christian Democratic party, but the major influence of the church would seem to be within the large parties themselves.
19. "The strength of the Communists in the 1945 elections was about 550,000 out of 5,800,000 votes. They elected one senator, 14 federal deputies and 64 out of 905 state deputies. There were 174,000 Communist votes in 1946 in Sao Paulo with most or all of them supporting Adhemar de Barros. As one Social Progress party member explained 'in building a new party you must accept support where you can get it. But Adhemar made no political commitments to get those votes.'
20. "The former chief of the now illegal Communist party in Piracicaba is employed as a grade school teacher. He is an alderman under the Social Progress label, but the party leaders disclaim him as a real member of the party. I was told that the local party headquarters were closed for repainting" so as to keep them from being used for organizational activities.
21. "This discussion of Brazilian politics may be summarized about as follows:
 - (1) The electorate has been broadened and election procedures improved considerably during the past decades. Further improvement will depend upon improvement in literacy or a different technique for identifying individual candidates.
 - (2) Party discipline and party loyalty are largely replaced by personal loyalty and individual and local organization of political processes. Only the illegal Communist party is organized for a mass appeal. Yet individuals such as Vargas (because of labor laws developed in his administration) and Adhemar de Barros (because he has become identified as someone interested in the worker's welfare) have an appeal to lower economic groups. Eduardo Gomes leading the Democratic Union has not been able to accomplish this.
 - (3) Political deals and local bossism play a considerable role in Brazilian politics, particularly as less educated people become voters. Corruption is a more accepted phase of political activity in Brazil than in the US although whether there is more of it or not is an open question.
 - (4) The cooperation of members of several parties is needed to pass state and federal legislation but this tends to be attained on an individual rather than on a party basis. Access of individuals to patronage does not necessarily depend on party support of the president, at least during this period when the political and party system is evolving and gradually finding a way of operating in the Brazilian cultural environment."

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